

Legislative Research  
SAFLL-2

January 1962

Congressional Information

Name: Smith, Margaret Chase - Republican - Senator from Maine

Home: Skowhegan, Maine

Born: December 14, 1897

Marital Status: Widow. Husband died in 1940

Military: Lieutenant Colonel, USAF (retired)

Education: Skowhegan High School

Profession: Businesswoman

Teacher in Skowhegan. Office executive. Independent Reporter.  
Treasurer New England Process Co.  
Member 76th Congress, 2d District of Maine (also 77th through  
80th Congresses)  
Elected to US Senate 1949, 1955; 1961

Committees: Armed Services (Subcommittees: Preparedness Investigating; Study  
Conflict of Interest Laws; Cold War Menace)

Appropriations (Subcommittees: Department of Defense; General  
~~Government Matters~~; Independent Offices; Department of Labor;  
Public Works & AEC; Department of State; *Deficiencies*;  
*Dept of Commerce*)  
Aeronautical and Space Sciences

Minority Policy Committee

Bases: Dow, Loring, Presque

Remarks: Long noted as one of our most air-minded political figures. In 1957  
she broke sound barrier by flying as passenger with Maj. Clyde Good  
in a F100-F Super Sabre.  
She was elected to House of Representatives to replace her husband  
(at time he was Congressman she was his administrative assistant).  
She remained in House for 10 years before entering Senate succeeding  
Senator Wallace White who had retired. She was the second woman  
elected to the Senate and first to enter it without going there  
originally through appointment.  
In 1957 she went on an active duty tour (at request of S/AF) to make  
a study of personnel problems involving retention and reenlistment  
of technically qualified officers and airmen especially those assigned  
to guided missile teams.

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She's an outstanding proponent of Reserve legislation and is considered 'father' of the Reserve Officer Personnel Act (P.L. 773, 83d Congress). She is careful to see Reservists are fully qualified for promotion.

Her annual contribution to the Senate Salad -- Maine lobster.

86th Congress - comments --

Some bills she introduced: S. 18, promotion of Reserve officers; S. 24, general amendments relative to conditions for the purchase of supplies and making contracts by the US; S. 910 (cosponsor), payment in lieu of taxes on Federal real property

Reserves -- she opposed nomination of certain Reservists to be brigadier generals because in her opinion she felt their training records were not sufficient to warrant promotion.

Army -- she voted against the Symington amendment to increase Army modernization and for the Thurmond amendment to decrease funds for civil airlift. (Cong. Record July 13, 1959)

AF Career -- asked Gen. LeMay if S. 1795 (AF Career Management Plan) would provide quality control; whether he had further legislation in mind and if the program would affect Reserve officers on duty. (Senate hearings on S. 1795 Page 17 - June 17, 1959)

War -- asked Gen. White about length of war when SAC replied that first phase would be over in 2 to 4 days, aircraft in low level attack would be picked up rather early. (Major Defense Matters hearings 1959 Page 52, 62, 103)

Missiles -- doesn't think vast number of missiles alone insure military superiority. There can be a diminishing return of numbers. Interested in what's being done on miniaturization -- on getting more concentrated destructive power packed into lighter and smaller weapons. Asked if our principal difference with Soviet is that the latter concentrating on a missile program while US is dividing its efforts and resources between continuation of a heavy bomber program and a less concentrated missile program. (Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee hearings - January 1959 - Missile and Space Activities)

87th Congress - comments --

Polaris -- remarked on visit to naval radio station at Cutler, Maine. Said station will be hub of world-wide communication system for "the greatest defense weapon we have, the Polaris missile nuclear submarine." (Cong. Record January 17, 1961 Page 850)

Bombers -- during FY61 DOD budget hearings -- it's her feeling we ought to perfect the B-52. Doesn't want to get rid of manned bombers until we are ready. Said there's a question the B-70 will be ready in time. Later, with reference to the B-70 said: "Is that not the point for this committee to consider. If the need for the improved manned bomber is proved is it not essential that we speed up the development rather than to stretch it out."

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Presque Isle Snark Missile Base - she could not in good conscience protest closing. Said it would be playing politics with national security, national defense, and our taxpayer's dollar. (Cong. Record March 30, 1961 P 5001) Later, she wrote (May 11 and May 22) to the AF Secretary requesting use of base for establishment of a Vocational Institute.

Excerpts from Procurement of Aircraft, etc. Hearings (April 1961) --

Asked Sec. Zuckert and Gen. White questions - relative to roles of manned bombers and missiles. Which carry greater load of AF mission? What is situation today and what AF anticipates it will be in 1964, 1967, 1970?

Asked about the nuclear plane -- feels certain it will someday be a feasible means of propelling aircraft.

Asked AF opinion about cutback in B-70; about AF Reserve airlift capability and would it be contracted or expanded in the future.

On Senator Stennis -- said: ". . . he is the man to watch in the years ahead on the direction of military policy in the U.S. Senate." (Cong. Record June 8, 1961 Page 9174)

Consultants -- hopes BOB takes long hard look at duplication in Departments employing consultants. Believes Congress should enact general legislation which would apply Government-wide in order to have a single system and a set standard that would apply both to individual consultants and to management consulting firm. Said: "It would appear to me extremely desirable to retain some form of legislative control and review of the agencies discharging their duties by the utilization of contracts instead of executive branch personnel." (Cong. Record June 27, 1961 Page 10598)

Communism -- on the Senate floor discussed the question -- what has happened that permits Khrushchev to act as he does? Overall military advantage is on our side. "But the day we lose sight of this fact, we are in danger of frightening ourselves -- of being mesmerized by Khrushchev's confidence and deterring ourselves instead of deterring the Soviets. . . ." Criticized the 'highly articulate and persuasive zealots' who argue that increasing conventional forces is best way to create more effective deterrence. "They believe that flexibility in the application of military force can come only from conventional forces. I know of nothing in political or military history which supports a thesis that it is safer to be weak than strong. . . ." Sees no hope in deterring Soviets by making the risks they must face less fearful for them. Said: "If we hold the military advantage, why, one may well ask, is our deterrence not more effective? What is the reason it is not? The reason is that deterrence is not a matter of forces and firepower alone. The restraints and influence are projected from the capacity to accomplish a purpose; not just from what we have but from what we will do . . . . We have the nuclear capability but not the nuclear credibility." (Cong. Record September 21, 1961 Page 19384)

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